

The Comparative Philology of the Sakai and Semang Dialects of the Malay Peninsula—A Review.

BY C. O. BLAGDEN.

There has recently appeared in the *Bijdragen tot de Taal-Land-en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië* a monograph^a of some length on the Sakai and Sëmang dialects, which may fairly claim to be the most comprehensive piece of work yet done in this connection and is therefore deserving of the attention of the readers of this Journal. It is the more interesting as being the first occasion for many years that a scholar of some standing in Europe has been attracted to the study of these dialects, and it will serve as a landmark for future collection and research in relation to his rather neglected subject.

Never before have these dialects been submitted to the systematic comparison to which Professor Schmidt subjects them in his paper. It has been his purpose to collate all the existing published materials and to see whether any sound inferences could be drawn from such a comparison. He has actually omitted very little, and that little is not of the first importance. The sources from which he draws are carefully enumerated: they include, besides the previous numbers^b of this Journal the works of Newbold^c, Roberts,^d De Morgan^e and Vaughan Stevens^f as well as the vocabularies published by Klaproth^g Tomlin,^h Low,ⁱ Borie^j and Maclay,^k so that they comprise practically everything of permanent value that had

a. Die Sprachen der Sakei und Semang auf Malacca und ihr Verhältnis zu den Mon-Khmër Sprachen, von P. W. Schmidt, S. V. D., *Bijdragen*, etc., ('S Gravenhage, 1901) No. 52, (6e Volgr., Deel 8) pp. 399-583.

b. Nos. 5, p. 129 *et seq*; 8, p. 112 *et seq*; 9, p. 167 *et seq*; 24, p. 13 *et seq*; 27, p. 22 *et seq*; 29, p. 13 *et seq*; See also Nos. 1 p. 41 *et seq*; 3, p. 113 *et seq*; 33, p. 247 *et seq*.

appeared in print about these dialects when the author's paper was written¹. The addition of the relatively few words given by Lias^m and the vocabularies of Castelnauⁿ and Errington de la Croix^o, as well as those published in the *Selangor Journal*^p, would have made the collection as nearly complete as could have been wished.

c. T. J. Newbold, *Political and Statistical Account of the British Settlements in the Straits of Malacca*, (London, 1839) Vol. II, pp. 369-434.

d. Edm. Roberts, *Embassy to the Eastern Courts of Cochinchina, Siam, etc.* (New York, 1837) pp. 413-415.

e. L. De Morgan, in *Bulletin de la Société Normande de Géographie*, (Rouen, 1885), Vol. 7. p. 434 *et seq.*; reprinted as *Exploration de la presqu'île malaise*, (Paris, 1886), *Linguistique*.

f. H. V. Stevens, (ed. Grünwedel) *Materialien zur Kenntniss der Wilden Stämme auf der Halbinsel Malaka*, in *Verröfentlichungen aus dem Königlichen Museum für Völkerkunde* (Berlin, 1892, 1894) esp. Pt. II, p. 145 *et seq.*

g. Klaproth in *Journal Asiatique* No. 12, pp. 241-3 (Paris, 1883).

h. Tomlin, "A list of Samang Words" from the "Malacca Observer," no date given. This appears, however, to be a mere reprint of the list given by Begbie in *The Malayan Peninsula*, (Vepery Mission Press, 1834) pp. 14-18.

i. Low in *Journal of the Indian Archipelago*, Vol. IV, p. 431.

j. H. Borie, *Notice sur les Mantras*, in *Tijdschrift voor Ind. Taal-Land-en Volkenkunde* Vol. 10, p. 439 *et seq.* (Batavia, 1861) (translated in *Indo-Chinese Essays*, 2nd Series, Vol. I.)

k. Miklucho-Maclay in *Tijdschrift voor Ind. Taal-Land-en Volkenkunde*, Vol. 23 p. 303 *et seq.*, p. 309 *et seq.* (Batavia, 1876). A part of these last also appeared in this *Journal* (No. 1), but the lists there given are less complete and are disfigured by several misprints.

l. See also J. Crawford *History of the Indian Archipelago* Vol. II, p. 125 *et seq.*, (Edinburgh, 1820). *Malay Grammar* Vol. I. p. clxvi, clxxi-ii (London, 1852). W. Marsden, *Miscellaneous Essays*, (London, 1834), pp. 87, 113. J. Anderson, *Political and Commercial Considerations relative to the Malayan Peninsula* (Prince of Wales Island, 1824) p. xlv *et seq.*

m. Brau de St. Pol Lias, *Pérak et les Orangs-Sakèys* (Paris, 1883) pp. 270-273.

n. F. de Castelnau, *Mémoire sur les Mantras*, *Revue de Philologie et d'Ethnographie* (Paris, 1876), Vol. II, pp. 142-3.

o. Errington de la Croix, *Les Sakaies de Pérak*, *Revue d'Ethnographie* (Paris, 1882) Vol. I, pp. 317-341.

p. *Selangor Journal* (1895) Vol. III p. 223 *et seq.*; 240 *et seq.*; (1897) (Vol. V p. 325 *et seq.*; 361 *et seq.*; 378 *et seq.*; 393 *et seq.*

The author's merits, however, do not lie in the mere compilation of materials: he analyses his sources with the utmost ingenuity, showing how in some cases two authorities have borrowed from one source, which is sometimes a written, sometimes an unwritten one, and how the several vocabularies are related *inter se*^q. Here it might have been worth while to go even more deeply into the bibliography of the subject, and to show, for instance, that Klaproth's list is an unacknowledged copy from the one that appears in Crawford's History of the Indian Archipelago, eked out however with some additions from elsewhere, and to mention that Roberts merely copies, as he himself admits, from Anderson. In dealing with Newbold's somewhat irritating "Benua" list, the author rightly points out that it is a heterogeneous mixture of Běsisi with words from some Sěmang dialect cognate to the one given by Tomlin (and Begbie); but his want of first-hand acquaintance with the spoken dialects of Malacca has prevented him from recognizing in it a third element, viz: Jakun, which is represented by a good many words collected for Newbold by Munshi 'Abdullah, as related by the latter in his well-known Autobiography. It is worth noticing too, though the author does not mention it, that the older sources (i. e., prior to 1875) practically all deal either with the Sěmang dialects of the North of the Peninsula (collected from Penang) or the dialects of the south (collected from Malacca). The latter barely take in the Southern fringe of the Sakai group, the purer forms of which, situated as they are in the centre of the Peninsula, remained quite unknown (except for the short notice by Colonel Low) until the introduction of the Residential system opened the Native States to European enquirers.^r

q. I may, perhaps, be permitted, in this connection, to confirm the author's inference, drawn purely from internal evidence, that I did *not* copy the Běsisi words I gave in a former paper from my friend Mr. W. W. Skeat, or *vice versa*. Mine were collected in Malacca, his in Selangor. I venture to think it is rather a tribute to our accuracy that they exhibit so few serious discrepancies.

r. Bearing these limitations in view and allowing for their occasional errors, the old lists are still very valuable and well worth studying, especially for the Sěmang dialects.

After discussing the sources, Professor Schmidt gives a comparative vocabulary of words of all the aboriginal dialects represented in them, reduced as far as possible to a uniform system of spelling and arranged according to the apparent relationships of the individual words. This has been very well done and must have been a difficult and troublesome task, but it is needless to say that such an arrangement (the only one possible for comparative study) is necessarily, in the present imperfect state of our knowledge of the subject, to some extent tentative and provisional. In many cases the author's assumption of an underlying affinity seems somewhat unconvincing. It is difficult, for instance, to believe that *log*ⁿ is the same word as *jěhu*: true they both mean "tree" or "wood" (though I believe *log*ⁿ = "tree," Mal. *pohon* and *jěhu* = "wood" Mal. *kayu*), and there are, it must be admitted, forms in existence which seem to be almost intermediate between them, e. g., *delok*ⁿ, *jelop*, *jěhup* and the like, but the evidence of identity does not seem to be quite conclusive, the more so as, apparently, the two variant forms appear on occasions together in one dialect.*

Sometimes, too, in his natural desire to arrive at identifications, the author is inclined to take liberties with his authorities: e. g., he will have it that *ge*, "to eat" (in Sěmang) is to be pronounced *je*, so as to bring it into line with the other and more common word for "to eat," viz: *cha* (Sakai), *chi* (Sěman). But the *g* in *ge* is hard, and the word appears to be quite distinct from *cha* and *chi*.

In compiling his comparative vocabulary, the author has designedly omitted words of Malayan origin.[†] This is somewhat regrettable as the forms assumed by these words in the aboriginal dialects throw an interesting light on their phonology. Moreover the omission seems to involve the assumption that all such words are of comparatively modern importation from Malay, whereas in fact there are in these dialects words of undoubted Malayan affinity which cannot possibly have come into them in that way. Certainly such words as *to'ot* "knee", *asu* "dog" *awe*

s. See Dr. Luering's Ulu Kampar Sakai in No. 35 of this Journal.

t. The process has not been quite completely carried out, some 50 words being left in, besides those noticed by the author.

"rattan," *siah* "salt," *manuk* "fowl," *kebus* "dead," *hirum* "black," point back to a Malayan dialect *other than Malay*, and the presence of such words, relatively few though they are, inevitably throws some doubt on the origin of others whose source, by reason of their being common to Malay and other Malayan languages, is necessarily a subject of uncertainty.

The omission of these words obscures one important element in the constitution of the aboriginal dialects which must not be left out of sight in any speculation as to their origin and affinities.

It is difficult to account for their presence in the aboriginal dialects of the Peninsula except on the assumption that they represent relics of Malayan dialects locally evolved there and distinct from Malay itself, which is a Sumatran language not originally native to the Peninsula; and in that case their introduction must, it would seem, be of very ancient date, going back to the days when Malay had not yet become the language of the Peninsula; or to put the same thing in another way, some of these aboriginal dialects are, at any rate in part, derived from an independent Malayan origin going back to a remote antiquity. While, therefore, there can be no doubt as to the importance of the well-known Mon-Annam element in the aboriginal dialects, this very archaic Malayan element is equally deserving of recognition.

These points are not without importance, for the author's argument for the Mon-Annam origin of these dialects depends to some extent upon the percentage of Mon-Annam words which can be discovered in them: if therefore the aggregate number of words examined is unduly reduced, either by arbitrary exclusion or by doubtful identifications, it is plain that this percentage will be overstated. As the figures stand, the author reduces his words to about 1250 and of these he professes to identify about 240, say 20 per cent, as Mon-Annam. The comparison is made at a later stage, and it is rather anticipating matters to mention it here, but it is the main thesis of the article.

Most of the identifications seem to be quite unassailable and even if they only account for something less than 20 per cent of the vocabulary, that is still a considerable achievement.

But a good many are at least doubtful, and one great element of uncertainty remains which it is at present impossible to eliminate, viz: the question whether the so-called Mon-Annam languages themselves constitute a true family or are not rather a very mixed formation, embodying various elements of unknown origin.

The point is shortly this: so long as one is dealing with Peguan or Cambojan, about which, as they are written languages, a considerable amount is known, one is on relatively safe ground and can fairly refer words, that are attested by their appearance in these two languages, to the Mon-Annam group. But when it comes to words that reappear only in such dialects as Lemet, Cat, Sedang and the like, of which merely a few short vocabularies exist, while little or nothing is known of their structure, the genuine Mon-Annam character of such words is at least doubtful. The frequent comparisons with Cham which the author makes also illustrate this point: for Cham is, in part at least, a Malayan language. Such a word as *cheong* "belly" in SĚmang, if it be really identical with the Cham *tian*, cannot be referred to a Mon-Annam origin, for *tian* is unquestionably Malayan, occurring as it does in several island languages of the Archipelago.

The fact is that one is dealing here with very mixed materials, and even the greatest care will not prevent an occasional mistake.

After setting out the comparative vocabulary and the too few sentences which have been recorded, the author proceeds to give what is really the first attempt at a comparative grammar of these dialects. As a first attempt it can only be characterized as admirable.

He begins by discussing the sounds, both vowels and consonants: and here it is worth while laying stress upon his well-grounded complaint that collectors almost uniformly omit to give a key to their systems of orthography. If they would only be good enough to explain precisely how they intend words to be pronounced, the work of the comparative student would be much facilitated. The discussion of the phonology of these dialects brings out several interesting points. The nasal consonants are noticed; the nasal vowels, however, which are

equally well-marked, are not observed by the author, that is not his fault: it may be explained that they somewhat resemble the French *u* sounds, but are not unfrequently followed by an ordinary consonant. The pronunciation of the palatal letters (*ch, j, sh*) seems to require further elucidation, as it is not quite clear whether they are identical with the corresponding English sounds or somewhat softer. There is a question whether all the so-called diphthongs are really diphthongs or merely two vowels in juxtaposition, each retaining its separate force. A few letters seem to be doubtful: e. g., *z* and *j* in Newbold's list, where the former represents a rough (probably palatal) *r* and the latter generally a *p*; but both *z* and *j* appear, though rarely, in Sĕmang, and *z* in a few Sakai words. On these points perhaps future collectors may throw more light.

Reduplication and repetition as modes of word formation are next noticed, and then follows a most valuable section on prefixes and infixes. Their existence as formative elements in these dialects has been pointed out before," though never worked out as completely as is done here. There can be no two opinions as to its importance, especially in relation to the closely similar formation of the Mon-Annam and the Malayan families of speech. It may however be as well to express a doubt as to the soundness of the author's view that a prefix can be assumed whenever a word appears in two slightly varying forms differentiated by their initial syllables, or by the absence in one case of an initial syllable which appears in the other. In the first place, the mutability of sounds in these dialects is something quite remarkable, but this need not imply that the syllable which changes is a prefix, that is to say a merely formal accretion and no part of the essence of the word: for the same mutability shows itself in the final consonants,* which must surely be part of the root. Secondly, where there are two forms, a longer and a shorter, it is by no means certain that the shorter is always the original one: it may be only an abbreviation, the result of rapid speech and phonetic decay. Some allowance, too, must be made for the defective observation and spelling of some collectors.

u. e. g., by Mr. W. W. Skeat in *Selangor Journal*, Vol. V, p. 328.

v. The author gives instances of the interchange of *k, -t* and *-p*.

Still, after making a reasonable allowance for these sources of error, there remains a large number of words in which the existence of prefixes is quite certain. Their meaning is more difficult to arrive at, but some, e. g., *Ka-* in Běsisi and *ma-* in Sěmang are undoubtedly verbal, and there are others which are apparently adjectival and pronominal or demonstrative. One very curious verbal prefix found in a dialect of the Northern Sakai group (but by the collector, De Morgan, called Sěmang) appears to vary its final consonant to suit the final consonant of the principal root: e.g. *něpchip* "to go", *neblūp* "to enter," *někpok* "to open." This would seem to be in reality a combination of a prefix and a broken down repetition of the root word.

The author after comparing in succession the pronouns, personal, possessive, demonstrative and interrogative, proceeds to deal with the syntax of the substantive. It is worth noting that, so far as appears, the same system of syntax runs through all these dialects. The nominative (subject) precedes the predicate; the genitive, adjective and demonstrative pronoun follows the verb which governs it. Apparently there is no foundation, at any rate in the materials here analysed, for the theory that in Sěmang the ideology is different.

Next the numerals are compared: here there is a clear classification into groups, and as the numerals raise certain points of some difficulty and considerable interest it seems desirable to give specimens of the various types which occur. They are as follows:—

I	II	III	IV
<i>Sěmang.</i>	<i>Sakai.</i>	<i>Sakai.</i>	<i>Běsisi</i> (and other southern dialects)
	(<i>Těmbe'</i>)	(<i>Sěnoi</i>)	
1. <i>nai</i>	<i>neh</i> (<i>nei</i>)	<i>nanu</i>	<i>mui</i>
2. <i>bie</i>	<i>nar</i>	<i>narr</i>	' <i>mbar</i>
3. (<i>various</i>)	<i>ne'</i>	<i>ni</i>	' <i>mpe'</i>
4. (<i>various</i>)	(<i>none</i>)	(<i>none</i>)	<i>npun</i>
5. (<i>none</i>)	(<i>none</i>)	(<i>none</i>)	<i>māsok</i> "
6. (<i>none</i>)	(<i>none</i>)	(<i>none</i>)	<i>pěru</i>
7. (<i>none</i>)	(<i>none</i>)	(<i>none</i>)	<i>tempo</i>

For *three* in Sěmang the forms *pat*, *ne*, *diu* and for *four* *sa-beh* and *nos* are given. These seem doubtful; but all the forms

given in the above table are well attested, and it is noticeable how little agreement there is between the Sakai on the one hand and the Sémang and Běsisi respectively on the other. It is true that *one* appears to be the same in groups I and II and possibly this is due to the fact that II is a mixed group of Sakai with a tinge of Sémang in it, as is evidenced by other words common to these two groups. But the author's attempt to derive the forms of groups I, II and III from the purely Mon-Annam forms of group IV is more or less conjectural, and even if it is correct it leaves one with the curious result that the pure Sakai is (as regards the numerals) further removed from the regular Mon-Annam type than the mixed Běsisi and its neighbours. This group IV consists of a string of outlying dialects scattered along the border line between the pure Sakai and the Jakun, in a tract of country which extends from Ulu Těmběling and Kuantan (Pahang) to the Jasin district of Malacca and from Kuala Langat (Sělangor) to Ulu Indau (Johor). In this group alone^w do the numerals extend beyond *four*, and that fact as well as their singularly good state of preservation (in these very mixed dialects) seems to me to indicate that these Mon-Annam numerals were not native to the aboriginal dialects of the Peninsula but were imposed from without, and that they either have nothing whatever to do with the Sakai numerals (from which they certainly cannot be derived) or that they have filtered through into Sakai in degenerate forms. It seems very unlikely that the pure Sakai first imposed its numerals (in a primitive form) on the Jakuns who speak Běsisi etc., and then proceeded to corrupt them while the Běsisi preserved them unchanged.

So far as this evidence goes, it appears to me to tell against the conclusion which the author ultimately arrives at, viz: that all the aboriginal dialects of the Peninsula are branches of the Mon-Annam stock.

It will be seen, too, that it is a mistake to regard the various dialects as corruptions, in different degrees, of one single type

^w. Some rather dubious lists of numerals beyond "four" are given by two or three authorities, but all differ *inter se* and are suspected on that ground.

of Sakai, represented in its purest form by the Sěnoi dialect. This erroneous view has perhaps tended to discourage the collection of the other dialects, which has been stigmatized as useless except for the purpose of studying the progressive decay of the language. It is evident, however, that Sěnoi, though no doubt on the whole the purest type of its own class of Sakai, cannot be called upon to explain all the other dialects, some of which appear to be in some respects nearer to the ancient forms.

I need say nothing of the author's further comparison with the numerals of two Borneo dialects given in Mr. Ling Roth's work on Sarawak, as Mr. Ray (in "Man" 1902, No. 42) has shown that one of these so-called Borneo dialects is really a Sakai dialect of Perak collected by the late Mr. Brooke Low, while the resemblance of the other is very slight and clearly fortuitous.

After pointing out that a fair number of words (some 50 or so, and all or nearly all of them of Mon-Annam origin) run through almost all the dialects, the author next proceeds to analyse the lists where they differ, with a view to discovering the relationship of the various dialects *inter se* and establishing a classification of them into groups. Considering the paucity of the materials for many of the dialects, this is really a brilliant piece of work, to which justice could be done only by going into details for which there is no space in this notice. The upshot of it is that the dialects of the Peninsula, so far as they are here represented, fall into the following groups:—

I. Sěmang.

- (i) A relatively pure Sěmang (and Pangan) group, curiously homogeneous though covering a large tract of country and extending from Northern Kědah to southern Kělantān;
- (ii) Another Sěmang group, less pure than the preceding, represented by (a) the "Jooroo" (Juru) Sěmang of the authorities, (b) the dialect given by Begbie (and Tonlin) and (c) certain words in Newbold's "Benua" list: apparently to be regarded as "low country" Sěmang as opposed to the purer dialects of the interior hills.

II. Sakai.

(iii) The Těmbe' (or northern) Sakai group;

(iv) The Sěnoi (or central) Sakai group and the southern dialects, such as Běsisi.

Substantially this classification, so far as it goes, would seem to be entirely justified by the existing materials. It will be observed that the main line of division (that between groups I and II) corresponds pretty closely with the difference in race between the Negritos (Sēmangs) and the Sakais, while the sub-division of group II into sub-groups iii and iv coincides with Mr. Clifford's distinction between Těmbe' and Sěnoi and agrees with Dr. Luering's statement (which is borne out by a comparison of their vocabularies) that the Ulu Kampar Sakais, who belong to sub-group iv, cannot understand the dialect of the Kinta Sakais, who fall into sub-group iii. So far at least as the Western half of the Peninsula is concerned, this classification will probably stand the test of further enquiry: in Pahang there appear to be dialects of a mixed character which partake of some of the characteristics of several of these sub-groups and have peculiarities of their own as well. Of these the author had no knowledge, as they have not as yet appeared in print.

It is probable that sub-group iv should be further sub-divided into —

(a) Central Sakai, including Sěnoi, the Southern Perak dialects and some of the Sělangor dialects, down to and including the dialect of the Orang Tanjong of Ulu Langat,^x and

(b) Běsisi and a straggling group of allied dialects in Southern Sělangor, the Něgri Sěmbilan, Malacca, and part of Pahang.

This last sub-division runs along the borderland between Sakais and Jakuns: to the south and south-east of it come the more Malayan Jakun dialects of Johor and the neighbouring territories, and it is to be observed that the Běsisi group, itself, though remarkable for the purity with which it has preserved the Mon-Annam numerals, contains a considerable Malayan ele-

x. Selangor Journal (1895) Vol III pp. 244, 245.

ment. Similarly one of the chief differences between the Sěnoi and the Těmbe' groups is that the latter has more in common with Semang than the former. The purest Sěmang appears to be spoken in Central and Northern Kědah and the adjoining States of Raman and Ligei, and the purest^y Sakai in South-eastern Perak, between Sungei Raya and Ulu Slim, and in the adjoining valleys of Ulu Pahang. Between these centres there is a debatable country in which are to be found more or less mixed tribes speaking mixed dialects partly Sěmang, partly Sakai.

The author's classification appears to be defective in one point, namely in ignoring the Jakun group of the South of the Peninsula: this group, whatever its origin, is now hopelessly broken down and almost swamped with Malay, but it is of some interest and apparently originally quite distinct from Sakai.

Here we have, however, the first attempt at a systematic grouping of these dialects, and for this the author deserves every credit. He also brings out a most important fact, viz: that, underlying the common Mon-Annam element which apparently runs through practically all these dialects, though in varying strength, and the comparative uniformity of which has led some former writers into the erroneous Pan-Negrito theory,^z there is in the Sěmang dialects an alien element, neither Mon-Annam nor Malayan, which may reasonably be assumed to be the remnant of the original speech of the Negritos.

It is a mistake to assert that there are but few words common to Sakai and Sěmang: the contrary is the case, such words being fairly numerous. But, apart from these, there is a body of words apparently peculiar to Sěmang and not derived from Sakai or any other known language. It is in these words that the original affinities of the Sěmang dialects will have to be sought (if indeed it is any longer possible to detect them) and not in the words which Sěmang has in common with Sakai and

y. I mean pure with reference to Sěmang and Sakai intermixture only, leaving Malay influence out of the question.

z. By this I mean the notion (of Maclay and others) that the whole of the aborigines are of Negrito origin and that the differences amongst them depend merely, on the percentage of crossing with Malays.

the Mon-Annam languages of Indo-China. The author is fully justified in claiming to have established on purely linguistic grounds the existence of a distinct Semang group of dialects, spoken by and more or less co-extensive with the Negrito tribes of the North of the Peninsula.

It is true that the border lines of language and physique do not quite coincide: there are mixed Sakai-Semang tribes in Northern Perak who speak substantially Sakai dialects, while in Southern Kélanan and Tréngganu there are tribes, described as having the Sakai physical characteristics, whose dialects nevertheless must be classified as Semang. But the great point gained is that there is now proved to be a Semang group of dialects originally distinct from Sakai and retaining a considerable number of words for which no analogues have yet been found elsewhere. Instances of such words are (1) *Kěto*, "day," (2) *Kawau*, "bird," (3) *mako*, "egg," (4) *ekob*, "snake," (5) *ek*, "dog," (6) *gus, nyus*, "tooth," (7) *chas*, "hand," which are in no way connected with the corresponding Sakai words (1) *jish*, (2) *chim* (or *chep*), (3) *tap*, (4) *taju*, (5) *cho*, (6) *těmun*, (7) *těk*^m (or *tih*). With the possible exception of No. 6, none of the above Semang words appear to be Mon-Annam; while, of the Sakai, Nos. 2, 3, 5, 6, and 7 certainly are.

The next section of the paper is occupied with a careful analysis of the mode of formation of the Mon-Annam languages. It is shown that the sounds correspond pretty closely with those of our aboriginal dialects; but the greatest stress is laid on the system of prefixes and infixes. In this place it is hardly practicable to do more than illustrate this point by an example or two, drawn from the author's specimens. Thus in Cambojan, from a word *pěk*, "to fall to pieces; to split up; division," are derived the following:—

<i>pñek</i>	"part"
<i>pämpek</i>	"to divide"
<i>pamnek</i>	"piece"
<i>prenek</i>	"piece"
<i>prapek</i>	"division"

where the persistence of the root (here shown in italics) is clearly seen in spite of the apparatus of prefixes or infixes added to it. Another similar case is:—

<i>kāt</i>	“ to cut off ”
<i>khnāt</i>	“ measure ”
<i>kūmnāt</i>	“ piece ”
<i>thkāt</i>	“ pain ”
<i>tūnkāt</i>	“ pain, suffering.”

Analogous, though less elaborate, formations occur in several of the other Mon-Annam languages, and this system, it must be admitted bears a strong resemblance to the mode of formation of the aboriginal dialects of the Peninsula.

It must, however, be borne in mind that it also finds parallels in the Malayan family, some members of which (e.g. the Philippine languages) have carried it to an even higher stage of complicated development. In fact the relation between the Malayan and Mon-Annam families in this particular are very puzzling: there is so much similarity in their structure and so little, relatively speaking, in their material or lexicographical elements. I suppose it may be regarded as certain that these two families of speech formerly bordered on one another in Southern Indo-China (and possibly in the Peninsula too) and, it would seem that while they were in contact the one group in some way exercised a profound influence on the other, probably in the way, mainly, of the Mon-Annam group absorbing Malayan elements, both material and formal. This makes it doubly difficult, in the case of the aboriginal dialects of the Peninsula which must have been evolved somewhere near the border line of these two families, to decide to which, if either, of them they originally belonged, seeing that the mode of formation in both is so very similar. In the apparent absence of suffixes and in some other respects, however, it must be admitted that the aboriginal dialects offer more analogy to the Mon-Annam than to the Malayan family.

After analysing these formal elements, the author runs through the various parts of speech in the Mon-Annam languages

and compares them with the corresponding ones in the aboriginal dialects, so far as the materials admit of such comparison. The upshot of the matter is that, in his view, on grounds of phonology, structure, and similarity of pronouns, demonstrative adverbs and numerals, as well as the number of other words already alluded to, the Sakai and Sĕmang dialects are to be considered as essentially related to the Mon-Annam family. Further the author holds that, on anthropological grounds, the Sakais are to be considered as genuine members of the Mon-Annam group of races, and therefore that their dialects are not an acquired form of speech but represent their own original language.

This latter point is, unfortunately, very slightly handled. The author rests it upon (1) the dolichocephalic character (2) the dark complexion (3) the non-Mongoloid eyes and (4) the wavy hair of these tribes, characteristics which may be paralleled in certain of the Mon-Annam races.

This matter is, however, involved in great obscurity: for some of these characteristics appear to be absent in some of the Mon-Annam races. The Peguans and Cambojans appear to be decidedly Mongoloid in type, though with a difference: * and the author's view requires us to believe that this is due to crossing with a Mongoloid strain which has obliterated their genuine original characteristics, while these have been retained in relative purity by some of the wilder tribes. The thing is possible. One knows that in Indo-China there has been an enormous amount of crossing of races, and it is conceivable that a slight strain of the strong Mongoloid type (which, as one sees in Straits Eurasians, is very persistent even when present in small percentages) might have modified the physical characteristics of the civilized members of the Mon-Annam stock (after the wild tribes had parted off from it) without seriously affecting their languages.

In the case of the Negritos the matter is not susceptible of the same explanation, and the author's view is that the Sĕ

a. I am assured by a Peguan that he can distinguish his own people from the Burmese by their more oval faces and more prominent (almost European) noses; and that wavy hair occurs, though rarely, amongst them.

mangs have substantially given up their own languages and now speak dialects imposed upon them by a Mon-Annam race, that is presumably by their neighbours the Sakais, although they have preserved a good many genuine old Sëmang words.

The collection and analysis of new materials will show whether these conclusions are tenable. Personally I still incline rather to the view, suggested in a former number of this Journal, that most of the Mon-Annam words in these dialects have been imposed from without by the influence of a Mon-Annam race of higher civilization; and I think that the curiously pure form of the numerals in the otherwise mixed group of dialects to which Bësisì belongs supports this view. It would not however be inconsistent with this idea to hold that the Sakai dialects are also of Mon-Annam origin, though much more distantly related to the parent stem: and that would perhaps account for the divergence of the Sakai numerals from the normal type. In that case we should have two waves of Mon-Annam influence in the Peninsula, as well as two of Malayan, and the analysis of the dialects would be somewhat as follows:—

I. Common elements running through practically all the dialects—

- (1) Malay;
- (2) Mon-Annam of the purer type;
- (3) Malayan, other than Malay.

II. Separate original elements.

- (4) In Sëmang: the original language of the Negritos, whatever that may have been (possibly akin to Andamanese?)
- (5) in Sakai: a rude Mon-Annam form of speech (?)
- (6) in Jakun: Malayan (?) and if so, identical with (3) above (?).

It is evident from what has been said that though some progress has been made in the study of these dialects, much remains to be done; and as the author's main purpose, as stated by himself, is to encourage further research, it is to be hoped that collectors will be stimulated by his valuable paper, and will take the matter seriously in hand. Above all it is absolutely necessary to obtain a large number of genuine sentences, as

actually spoken by the aborigines: mere lists of words have their value, but the only chance of getting an insight into the grammar of a language lies in the collection and analysis of sentences, and that is now the most urgent *desideratum* in connection with these dialects. Such work can only be done properly by men on the spot and thoroughly conversant with local circumstances, and the task should be undertaken at once, before the imminent extinction of these dialects makes it for ever impossible. In view of the high value, from a scientific point of view, of such researches (which is attested by the interest taken in them by a scholar of European reputation like the author of the paper I have attempted to review) I venture to express the hope that the Governments of the Straits Settlements and the Native States will follow the good example, in these matters, of the Indian Government and will give some assistance, or at least encouragement, towards a systematic linguistic survey of the Peninsula on the lines of the Linguistic Survey of India.